



# QESBA Annual Report

## 2019-2020

QESBA is the voice of English public education in Québec and represents 100,000 students in 340 elementary, high schools, and adult and vocational centres across Québec.

centres across Québec

## Our History

Since 1929, the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) and its predecessors have served as a vehicle through which its school board members, elected commissioners, and parents have shared ideas and worked together to achieve the common goal of ensuring quality educational services focused on student success. In fulfilling this key role, the QESBA and its predecessors have contributed to modern public education policy in Québec, including the creation of linguistic school boards, the management of ever increasing demands on teachers and school administrators, understanding and promoting the diversity of school communities, and preparing students to effectively contribute to a predominantly French-speaking Québec society. The QESBA has consistently advocated for the acknowledgement and protection of the education rights of the Official Language Minority in Québec, specifically Section 23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and most notably the Official Language Minority Community's right to manage and control its school boards and schools.

In 2019, the QESBA represents the nine English-language school boards in the province and one special status school board, Littoral. The QESBA network is comprised of 340 schools and approximately 100,000 students. Each Board is unique in terms of territory covered, demography of the population it serves, board orientations, and history. All share a "made-in-English-Quebec" sensibility to delivering public education services, with equal regard for all creeds, religions, or cultures. Because school commissioners and boards are our valued clients, the prime focus of the



## Our Mission

The purpose of the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is to advocate appropriate education for students in both the youth and adult sectors and to enhance the effectiveness of school commissioners and member school boards in the areas of education, finance, administration and labour relations.

Because school commissioners and boards are valued clients, the prime focus of the Association is to fulfill the needs of school boards. In this perspective, we communicate, collaborate and cooperate with other educational organizations including the Ministry of Education.

Association is to respond to the needs of our school board members. Given this orientation, the QESBA collaborates with a wide network of educational partners to fulfill this mandate.

## **Annual Report 2019-2020**

2019-2020 has been one of the busiest in QESBA's 90-year history. Between the CAQ government halting all debate and adopting Bill 40 by invoking closure, to the COVID-19 pandemic and finally a successful preliminary court decision regarding a stay to Bill 40, your Executive Committee and Board of Directors has not stopped.

### **Professional Development Session – Annual General Meeting**

We began last fall with the Professional Development Session and Annual General Meeting where Dan Lamoureux was re-elected President for a two-year term and Noel Burke was re-elected Vice-President, also for a two-year term. The PD Session was highly successful, held at the Hotel Mortagne in Boucherville in the Riverside school board territory. The results of the evaluations are attached to this report.

### **QESBA Tour of Member Boards**

The QESBA successfully toured seven of nine-member boards last fall, the outlining boards were visited first to avoid winter travel. English Montreal and Lester B. Pearson were to be completed in 2020; unfortunately the COVID-19 pandemic forced QESBA to postpone those two visits. President Dan Lamoureux and Executive Director Russell Copeman represented the Association during this tour.

### **Court Challenges Program**

QESBA received a grant from Court Challenges Program in late 2019. The Association submitted a formal funding request to challenge the eventual adoption of Bill 40 and the panel accepted our funding request based on the imminent threat to our minority language



education system. Power Law is representing QESBA on all legal matters surrounding Bill 40 and they are managing this funding.

#### **Bill 40**

In collaboration with English-speaking Community partner organizations, APPELE-Québec, QCGN, QFHSA and EPCA the Quebec English School Boards

Association voted unanimously to challenge the constitutionality of Bill 40, which abolishes school boards and creates school service centres, before the courts.

The government of Quebec forced Bill 40 through the National Assembly in the early morning of February 8, 2020 through closure, despite unanimous opposition to the legislation and in complete disregard for the English-speaking community's right to manage and control its minority language educational institutions.

Over the course of 2019, QESBA had done everything possible to sit and discuss with the Minister of Education, Jean-François Roberge to ensure that our Section 23 control and management rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms were respected to no avail.

QESBA, through its lawyers, Power Law filled for a stay of legislation in May of 2020, which was successful over the summer.

#### **COVID-19**

The pandemic has impacted QESBA immensely, as it has our member boards. Life has become a completely different reality since March. All QESBA staff has been working remotely for the most part. The staff has added MEQ committee work to examine pedagogical and financial implications of the pandemic to our network.



The Association submitted clear and detailed recommendations to the Minister of Education in May and again in June attached to this report.

### **Canadian School Boards Association Congress 2021**

The QESBA Board of Directors decided in May to cancel hosting a physical CSBA Congress in 2021 with support from the CSBA. An on-line, condensed version will be held in July of 2021 instead.

### **QESBA Committee work**

#### **Constitution Committee**

The QESBA Constitution Committee began work on the changes to the QESBA Constitution surrounding Bill 40. All work has been suspended due to the stay of legislation. QESBA wishes to thank the Committee for its work.

Alain Guy, Chair

Members: Debbie Ford-Caron, Eric Bender, Lina Chouinard, Dan Lamoureux

#### **Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee met regularly over the course of the 2019-2020 fiscal year to review QESBA expenditures. You will find the audited statements from said fiscal year attached for your approval. QESBA wishes to thank the Finance Committee for its vigilant work over the last year.

Stephen Burke, Chair

Members: Keith Eldridge, Michael Murray, David D'Aoust, Peter MacLaurin, Alain Guy, Pierre Dionne

#### **Nominations Committee**

The Nominations Committee did not meet over this last fiscal year. This Committee meets over the year leading up to an electoral Annual General Meeting. QESBA wishes to thank the Nominations Committee.

David D'Aoust, Chair



Members: Debbie Ford-Caron, Frank MacGregor, Eric Bender

**Professional Development Committee**

The Professional Development Committee met regularly last fall to develop the program for the PD Session and Annual General Meeting. You will find the summary of evaluations for the successful PD Session held last fall. QESBA wishes to thank the members of the PD Committee for their dedication in offering timely and effective PD to commissioners and senior administration of our member boards.

Frank di Bello, Chair

Members: Mary-Ellen Beaulieu, Claire Beaubien, Lina Chouinard, Anna Capobianco-Skipworth, Peter MacLaurin

**Indigenous Education Committee**

The Indigenous Education Committee has not met over the last year mainly due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee will be invited to be the lead on the CSBA Gathering on Indigenous Education over the next fiscal year. QESBA wishes to thank the Committee for its participation.

Jo-Ann Toulouse, Chair

Members: John Ryan, Debra Wright, Peter MacLaurin, Chris Schaler

**QESBA Student Advisory Committee**

This is a newly formed Ad Hoc Committee of the QESBA Board of Directors that has been a value added addition to the Association. This Committee met regularly over the last fiscal year and was chaired by QESBA President Dan Lamoureux. This Committee will continue indefinitely and will see regular change in membership for students that sit who are in Secondary five. QESBA wishes to thank these students for their time and commitment to English public education.

Dan Lamoureux, Chair



Members: Abigaëlle Vasseur, EMSB, Serena Masciotra, LBPSB, Cynthia Marval and Bruno Rink, RSB, Paige Frost and Kristen Wilson, ETSB, Grace McLaughlin, WQSB, Roxanne O'Brien, NFSB, Davydaa Robinson, ESSB and Savannah Perron, Littoral

### **Labour Relations Team**

In 2019-2020, there have been some staff changes within the Labour Relations Department. In November 2019, two new secretaries were hired to work with the negotiation teams. In early July, after many years of dedicated service as secretary to the CPNCA and QESBA Labour Relations Team, Chantal Fortin retired. However, Chantal has accepted to be available to provide support to the administrative staff as new chapters of the 2020 negotiations unfold. In October 2020, we welcomed a new secretary following the departure of one of our secretaries. We are happy to report that the members of the negotiation teams have remained the same since their appointment, and are dedicated to representing the best interests and values of the English network.

### **2020 Negotiations**

The current collective agreements expired on March 31, 2020. On December 16 and 17, 2019, the Labour Relations Team submitted to the various unions its management offers which included the priorities and elements identified during the consultation process and approved by the LRAC members.

Since early January 2020, the negotiation teams initiated the actual negotiations process with their union counterparts representing the professionals, support staff and teachers. The first meetings were intended to provide an opportunity for both parties to present and explain union demands and management offers, respectively.

In mid-April, following the creation of the "Forum sur la réussite scolaire", the Treasury Board set up a committee at the intersectoral level (Central Table) to



discuss matters related to the teacher dossier and, as a result, sectoral teacher negotiations were put on hold. Sectoral negotiations resumed in early October 2020 with the appointment of a member of the CPNCA team representing the teacher dossier to take part in negotiations at both the intersectoral and sectoral levels. In addition, a member of the Treasury Board now collaborates with our CPNCA negotiation team at the sectoral level.

Negotiations were conducted at other bargaining tables from January 2020 until the end of the school year when unions announced that they would take some time off and resume negotiations either in mid-August or early September. However, negotiations with the CSN resumed at a later date.

In addition, in late June 2020, various unions, namely QPAT, FPSS, FPPE filed mediation requests with the Ministère du Travail, de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale. Mediation meetings took place in August and September 2020. Subsequently, the CSN filed a mediation request and the mediation meetings took place in October.

On August 25, 2020, the Labour Relations Team organized a professional development session focusing on “negotiations and pressure tactics” led by Me Serge Benoît, managing partner at Le Corre et Associés and attended by directors general, assistant directors general and chairmen of school boards, members of DHR Table, Russell Copeman and Kim Hamilton of QESBA as well as members of the CPNCA negotiation teams.

At the time of writing, negotiations are still well underway with the various unions for all employee groups.

#### DHR Table

The DHR Table, composed of directors, assistant directors and coordinators of the Human Resources Departments of the nine school boards, has continued





to hold its monthly all-day meetings scheduled from September to May.

Last year, as COVID-19 hit our province, the Labour Relations Team held weekly meetings, from March to July, with HR directors only. The weekly meetings provided directors an opportunity to discuss pressing issues related to the pandemic. At the directors' request, these "chat sessions" have been taking place every two weeks since the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year.

The COVID-19 pandemic calls for new approaches to the services provided to the network in terms of labour relations matters. In fact, the Labour Relations Team initiated daily reports to the network on statistics related to the pandemic. The Team also prepared and sent out a series of Q&A documents intended to provide guidance and recommendations on labour relations issues during these exceptional times. For example, from March to August 2020, the Team prepared and sent an English summary of every Q&A document published by the Ministry to HR teams and directors general. Our Team also created a useful guide on managing staff absences during the pandemic—a tool that includes links to recommendations issued by the Ministry and health authorities.

In 2019-2020, in addition to regular business meetings, the DHR team carried out, for a third year, the professional development project focusing on "mental health and well-being". Members of the DHR Table continued to participate in our Professional Learning Community (PLC) journey, and completed the remaining two chapters of the book entitled "Assembling the Pieces". In 2020-2021, we are pursuing this project with the expertise, support and guidance of Dr. Richard Koestner, Professor in the Department of Psychology at McGill University.

In 2019-2020, the nine school boards reviewed and analyzed the results emanating from the survey conducted by Morneau Shepell in May 2019 on the state

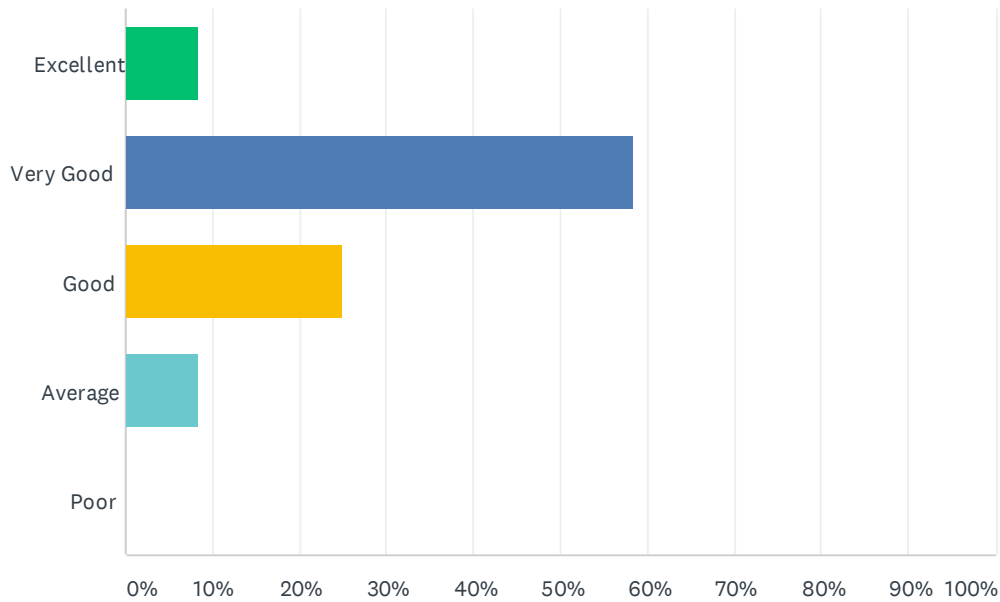




of well-being of employees. School boards have since developed their own action plan elements to be implemented in late 2019-2020 and throughout 2020-2021.

## Q1 What was your overall impression of the Friday evening session featuring: Bernie St-Laurent and Jonathan Goldbloom?

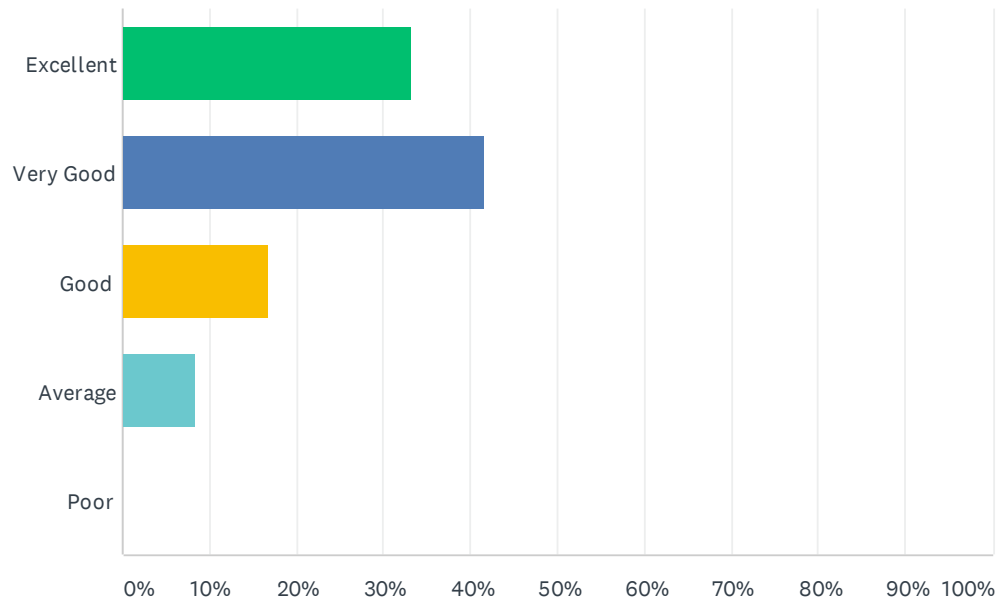
Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	8.33%	1
Very Good	58.33%	7
Good	25.00%	3
Average	8.33%	1
Poor	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

## Q2 What was your overall impression of the session on the Bill 40 session featuring Mark Power and Perri Ravon?

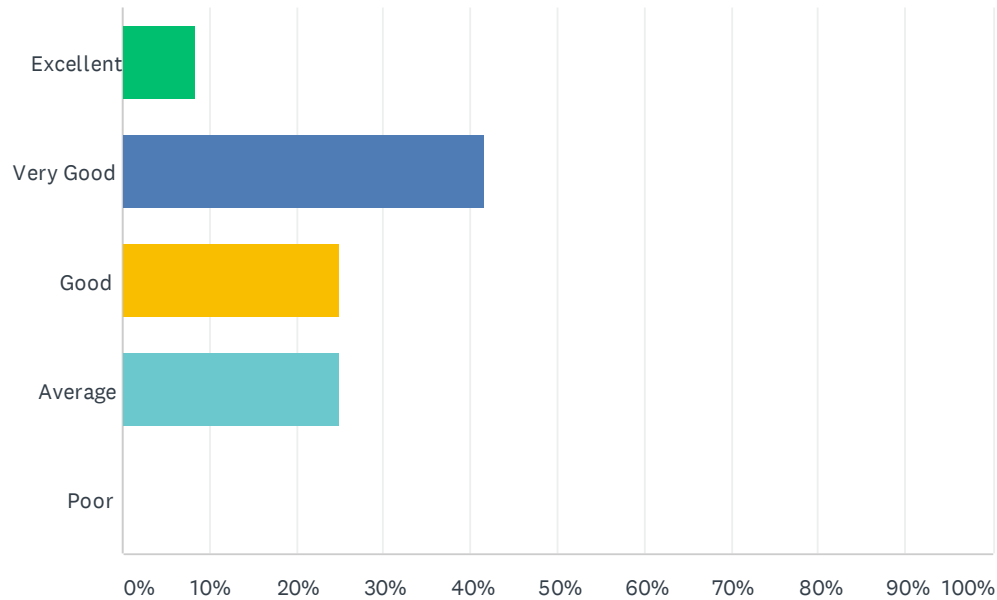
Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	33.33%	4
Very Good	41.67%	5
Good	16.67%	2
Average	8.33%	1
Poor	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

### Q3 What was your overall impression on the Community Connection and Mobilization session featuring: Sylvia Martin-Laforge, Geoffrey Chambers, Joan Fraser and Rhonda Boucher?

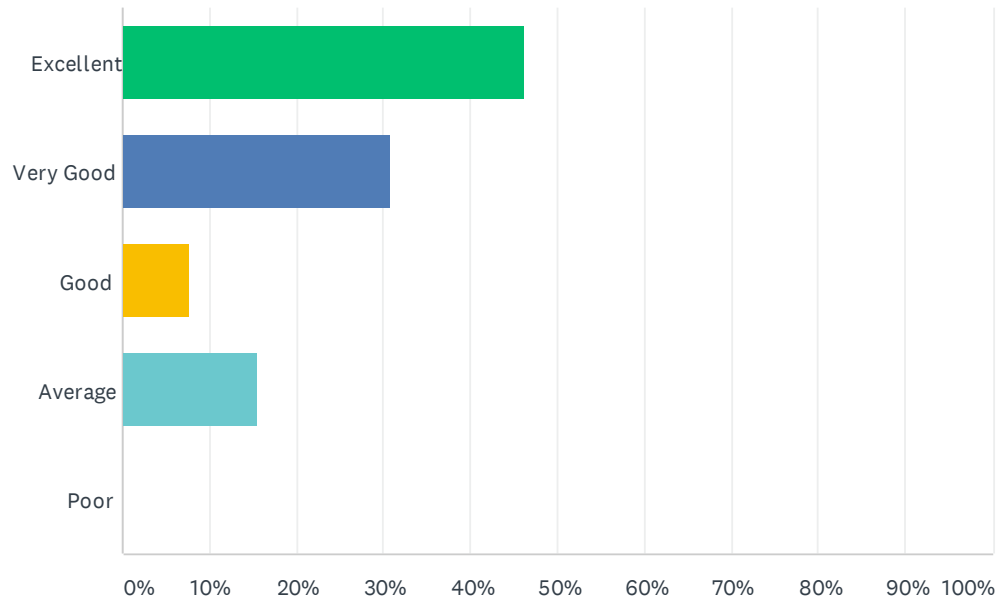
Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	8.33%	1
Very Good	41.67%	5
Good	25.00%	3
Average	25.00%	3
Poor	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

## Q4 What was your overall impression of the Hotel Mortagne

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	46.15%	6
Very Good	30.77%	4
Good	7.69%	1
Average	15.38%	2
Poor	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC**

**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**JUNE 30, 2019**

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JUNE 30, 2019**

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of  
Quebec English School Boards Association  
Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec

### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial statements of Quebec English School Boards Association / Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec (the Association), which comprise the statement of financial position as at June 30, 2019, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at June 30, 2019, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### *Basis for Opinion*

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### *Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements*

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

*Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements*

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.



- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

*FL Fuller Landau LLP*

Montreal, November 7, 2019

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<sup>1</sup> By CPA auditor, CA, public accountancy permit No. AI 18902



**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT JUNE 30, 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Current		
Cash	<b>119,121</b>	56,981
Short-term investments (Note 3)	<b>540,000</b>	420,000
Short-term investment - bursary	-	3,000
Accounts receivable (Note 4)	<b>25,823</b>	46,381
Prepaid expenses	<b>25,485</b>	20,631
MEES grant receivable	-	75,000
	<b>710,429</b>	621,993
Investment, at cost (Note 5)	<b>10,000</b>	10,000
Capital assets (Note 6)	<b>19,482</b>	22,057
	<b>739,911</b>	654,050

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT JUNE 30, 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Current		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	<b>94,637</b>	71,947
Deferred revenue (Note 7)	<b>130,476</b>	133,440
	<b>225,113</b>	205,387
K.D. Sheldrick Bursary	<b>3,000</b>	3,000
	<b>228,113</b>	208,387
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Invested in capital assets	<b>19,482</b>	22,057
Unrestricted	<b>492,316</b>	423,606
	<b>511,798</b>	445,663
	<b>739,911</b>	654,050

Commitments (Note 10)

On behalf of the Board,

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

\_\_\_\_\_, Director

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES**  
**ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019**

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>Revenues (Appendix A)</b>		
Membership fees (Note 8)	837,902	830,357
Reimbursement of salaries	86,447	79,939
Reimbursement of professional fees - grievances	69,868	53,917
Sales taxes recovery	57,251	16,793
Interest	13,975	6,753
Reimbursement of expenses - other associations	12,000	12,000
Miscellaneous	10,125	2,250
Other revenues	9,737	18,883
Commissioner development reimbursements	5,110	7,650
Arbitration administration fees - CPNCA	5,000	5,000
MEES grant revenue	-	75,000
	<b>1,107,415</b>	<b>1,108,542</b>
<b>Expenses (Appendix A)</b>		
Salaries	526,039	418,915
Fringe benefits	62,019	48,553
Rent	72,417	72,361
Professional fees - grievances	69,868	53,917
Memberships, subscriptions and registration fees	32,974	25,936
Honorariums - officers	31,414	45,468
Travel - directors	25,608	23,231
Travel - staff	15,673	6,784
Legal fees - regular	7,604	5,267
Service agreement - FCSQ	20,000	20,000
Association conference and general meetings	19,928	10,853
Office expenses	17,684	16,805
Professional fees	15,300	13,702
Communications/promotions	14,940	11,448
Commissioner development	13,552	19,774
Accounting and audit fees	12,190	11,782
Amortization of capital assets	11,810	7,164
Postage, telephone and telecommunication	11,588	8,795
Insurance	6,636	6,669
Arbitration and negotiation	4,876	7,071
Representation expenses	1,438	1,239
Professional/staff development	-	2,264
	<b>993,558</b>	<b>837,998</b>

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES**  
**ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC**  
**STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>113,857</b>	<b>270,544</b>
<b>Other expenses</b>		
School Board reform	-	4,750
School Board legal defense (Note 9)	<b>28,791</b>	-
Strategic planning and branding	<b>18,931</b>	74,580
	<b>47,722</b>	<b>79,330</b>
<b>Excess of revenues over expenses</b>	<b>66,135</b>	<b>191,214</b>



**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN NET ASSETS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019**

	Invested in capital assets \$	Unrestricted \$	<b>2019 Total \$</b>	2018 Total \$
Balance, beginning of year	22,057	423,606	<b>445,663</b>	254,449
Excess of revenues over expenses	(2,575)	68,710	<b>66,135</b>	191,214
Balance, end of year	19,482	492,316	<b>511,798</b>	445,663

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019**

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Operating activities		
Excess of revenues over expenses	66,135	191,214
Item not requiring cash		
Amortization of capital assets	11,810	7,164
	77,945	198,378
Net change in non-cash working capital items	113,430	(132,227)
	191,375	66,151
Investing activities		
Acquisition of capital assets	(9,235)	(5,483)
Acquisition of short-term investments	(120,000)	(20,000)
	(129,235)	(25,483)
Increase in cash and cash equivalents	62,140	40,668
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year	56,981	16,313
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	119,121	56,981

Cash and cash equivalents consist of cash.

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JUNE 30, 2019**

**1. Statutes of incorporation and nature of activities**

The Association is incorporated under Part III of the Quebec Companies Act and provides representation and technical support in educational matters to various school boards.

**2. Significant accounting policies**

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations (ASNFPPO) and include the following accounting policies:

**Use of estimates**

The preparation of these financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amount of assets and liabilities, the disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the reported period. These estimates are reviewed periodically and adjustments are made to income as appropriate in the year they become known.

**Revenue recognition**

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Restricted contributions for future periods are deferred and are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred.

Membership fees revenue are recognized when they become due by the member school boards for the school year to which they apply and collection is reasonably assured.

Other revenues consist of reimbursement of expenses incurred and are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

**Government assistance**

Government assistance in the form of government grants are accrued when earned and when there is also reasonable assurance that they will be realized.

Government grants relating to qualifying expenses are presented as an increase in revenues.

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JUNE 30, 2019**

**2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

**Cash and cash equivalents**

The Association's policy is to disclose bank balances under cash and cash equivalents.

**Capital assets**

Capital assets are accounted for at cost. Amortization is calculated using the straight-line method over the following periods:

	<u>Periods</u>
Furniture and fixtures	5 years
Computer equipment	1 year

**Impairment of long-lived assets**

Capital assets subject to amortization are tested for recoverability whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that their carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognized when the carrying amount of the asset exceeds the sum of the undiscounted cash flows resulting from its use and eventual disposition. The impairment loss is measured as the amount by which the carrying amount of the long-lived asset exceeds its fair value.

**Financial instruments**

**Measurement of financial instruments**

The Association initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value, except for certain non-arm's length transactions.

The Association subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash, short-term investments and accounts receivable.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JUNE 30, 2019**

**2. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

**Financial instruments (continued)**

**Impairment**

Financial assets measured at cost are tested for impairment when there are indicators of possible impairment. The Association determines whether a significant adverse change has occurred in the expected timing or amount of future cash flows from the financial asset. If this is the case, the carrying amount of the asset is reduced directly to the higher of the present value of the cash flows expected to be generated by holding the asset, and the amount that could be realized by selling the asset at the balance sheet date. The amount of the write-down is recognized in the Statement of Operations. The previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement, provided it is no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in the Statement of Operations.

**Contributed services**

Volunteers contribute their time to assist the Association in carrying out its activities. Because of the difficulty of determining their fair value, contributed services are not recognized in the financial statements.

**3. Short-term investments**

Guaranteed Investment Certificates (GICs) in the amount of \$400,000 bearing interest at 1.96%, maturing on July 29, 2019 and \$140,000 bearing interest at 2%, maturing on November 19, 2019. Subsequent to year-end, the \$400,000 GIC was redeemed and reinvested.

**4. Accounts receivable**

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Grievances receivable	5,927	25,512
Interest receivable	3,042	4,076
Sales taxes receivable	16,854	16,793
	<b>25,823</b>	<b>46,381</b>

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION**  
**ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES**  
**ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**JUNE 30, 2019**

**5. Investment, at cost**

The Association owns 1,000 units of Education Internationale, which represents 3.5% of all units.

**6. Capital assets**

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2019 Net book value	2018 Net book value
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Furniture and fixtures	38,377	22,286	16,091	22,057
Computer equipment	7,589	4,198	3,391	-
	45,966	26,484	19,482	22,057

**7. Deferred revenue**

The deferred revenue represents amounts received from different sources that relate to projects and membership fees that will occur in future years. The variations that happened during the year are as follows:

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Deferred revenue beginning of year	133,440	186,898
Deferred during the year	915,326	881,774
Recognized as revenue during the year	(918,290)	(935,232)
	130,476	133,440

**8. Membership fees**

The Association receives membership fees from the member school boards and these fees originate from government funding sources.

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
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NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
JUNE 30, 2019**

**9. School Board legal defense**

Subsequent to the approval of the budget, the Board of Directors of the Association passed a resolution to increase the budgeted amount for School Board legal defense to \$100,000.

**10. Commitments**

The Association has entered into a property lease agreement which matures on May 31, 2023. Future minimum payments for the next four years aggregate to \$250,251 and are the following:

	\$
2020	62,400
2021	62,563
2022	64,513
2023	60,775

The commitments of the Association under equipment leases maturing on July 8, 2024 aggregate to \$14,182. The instalments over the next five years are the following:

	\$
2020	3,519
2021	3,031
2022	2,544
2023	2,544
2024	2,544



**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
ASSOCIATION DES COMMISSIONS SCOLAIRES  
ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
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JUNE 30, 2019**

## **11. Related party transactions**

The following table summarizes the Association's related party transactions for the year:

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Membership fees paid to an association with board members in common	<b>10,500</b>	10,631
Honorariums paid to directors	<b>29,700</b>	39,900

These transactions are in the normal course of operations and are measured at the exchange amount, which is the amount of consideration established and agreed to by the related parties.

## **12. Financial instruments**

### **Risks and concentration**

The Association is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments, without being exposed to concentrations of risk. The following analysis provides a measure of the Association's risk exposure at the balance sheet date of June 30, 2019.

### **Liquidity risk**

Liquidity risk is the risk that an entity will encounter difficulty in meeting obligations associated with financial liabilities. The Association is exposed to this risk mainly in respect of its accounts payable and accrued liabilities.

### **Market risk**

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Market risk comprises three types of risk: currency risk, interest rate risk and other price risk. The Association is mainly exposed to interest rate risk.

**QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION  
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ANGLOPHONES DU QUÉBEC  
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JUNE 30, 2019**

**12. Financial instruments (continued)**

**Interest rate risk**

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Association is exposed to interest rate risk on its fixed interest rate financial instruments. The Association's exposure to market interest rates relates primarily to the return it earns on its short-term investments. They currently earn interest based on a fixed rate of 1.96% and 2% and are consequently exposed to interest rate risk should the market rate increase.

**13. Comparative figures**

Certain figures for 2018 have been reclassified to make their presentation identical to that adopted in 2019.



Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION**

## **QESBA Believes Merits of the School Transfer Issue Must be Heard**

MONTREAL, JULY 8, 2019 – The Québec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is disappointed with the decision of the Superior Court of Québec regarding the provisional stay filed by the English Montreal School Board (EMSB) last week to suspend the transfer of two of its schools to the Commission scolaire de-la-Pointe-de-l'Île (CSPI).

A provisional stay requires that four criteria be met:

- there must be a matter of urgency;
- there must be a serious legal question to be considered (the issue must neither be frivolous nor vexatious);
- there must be a serious prejudice or irreparable loss;
- the balance of inconvenience between both sides (EMSB and CSPI) must be determined

The judge determined that the criteria of urgency had not been met as the boards had agreed to a proper transition period. The judge did find that the arguments raised by the EMSB on the legal issue based on section 23 of the Canadian Charter and whether the rights of the minority English-speaking community were violated were serious. The judge further agreed that there would be serious and irreparable harm to the EMSB by losing two of its schools but that the balance of inconveniences favoured the arguments advanced by the CSPI.

QESBA will support the decision of the EMSB whatever it may be going forward. However, the judgment clearly indicated that the English-speaking community's Constitutional minority-language education rights are legitimate and serious arguments, therefore giving our community ample room for further legal recourse.

“It is unfortunate that the judge felt that the four elements for a provisional stay were not met. However, it is clear that our community has legal recourse to protect our institutions and our section 23 minority rights,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

“QESBA believes that the fundamental question of the validity of that section of the Québec Education Act which gives the Government the exceptional power to transfer schools remains to be determined. It would be in the broader interest of the English-speaking community of Québec if this were clarified by the Courts”, concluded the President.

QESBA is the voice of English public education in Québec and represents 100,000 students in 340 elementary, high schools, and adult and vocational centres across Québec.

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Information: Kim Hamilton  
Director of Communications and Special Projects  
514-919-3894



Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

## **Government should launch vast province-wide consultation on vision of public education**

**MONTREAL, AUGUST 27, 2019** – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is preoccupied by the Government of Québec's piecemeal approach to public education.

"The Government has undertaken a number of significant changes to our education system since their election, such as school tax reform, fees charged to parents, universal kindergarten for four-year olds, and school governance reform is expected this fall. These changes have been implemented without a clear, broader vision on the future of public education in Québec" said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

The QESBA supports the suggestion made by our colleagues at the Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec (FCSQ) for a Québec-wide reflection on the kind of public school we want.

- What are the long-term solutions to address the shortage of qualified and licensed teachers and professionals?
- How to value the teaching profession?
- Should teacher training be reviewed?
- What twenty-first century skills do we need to teach students?
- How to improve accessibility to the public education system?
- How to interest all English Quebecers in education and to maintain a very important local educational culture in each community?

Society evolves quickly, any delay in a reflection of this magnitude will accentuate the gap between school boards and communities. QESBA along with our partners at the FCSQ invites the government to embark upon this extremely important reflection to provide Quebec with a vision of its public education system.

"Education is the cornerstone of any society, the foundation on which Québec was built. Nearly 25 years after the Estates General on Education, we should be ready to rethink and improve public education in Quebec through a comprehensive, discussion by civil society," concluded the President.

As always, QESBA offers the government of Québec it's support in initiatives that will ultimately benefit our students and our communities. QESBA is the voice of English public education in Québec and represents 100,000 students in 340 elementary, high schools, and adult and vocational centres across Québec.

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## **French and English school boards united for the success of Québec students**

Québec, September 12, 2019 - La Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec (FCSQ) and the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) wish to reaffirm their solidarity in maintaining school board elections. As we have always done, English and French school boards work together for the main mission of our collective networks - student success.

Governance and democracy in our public education networks are important to both associations. Electoral participation in our communities is a guarantee of community representation, good management and equitable distribution of resources. Governance reform is not and should not be a priority. Student success of all Quebec students should be our collective priority.

### **About the FCSQ and QESBA**

The Fédération des commissions scolaires du Québec brings together the vast majority of French school boards in Québec as well as the Commission scolaire du Littoral. School Boards are local governments that ensure the academic success of more than one million students by providing educational services at the elementary, secondary, vocational and adult education levels through the commitment of 120,000 employees. They also provide effective and essential services, including human resources and material and financial resources. In addition, school boards are responsible for equitably distributing resources among their schools and making safe school transportation available at all times.

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**Source :** Caroline Lemieux  
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Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

## **QESBA statement on the government's decision to place the EMSB under trusteeship**

The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA), as a general rule, does not comment on the particular situations of our member boards. However, the trusteeship, by the Government of Québec of the English Montreal School Board (EMSB), the largest English school board in Québec, is an exceptional event.

Firstly, the process leading to this decision of the Québec Cabinet has been less than transparent. The Education Department report on the EMSB has never been made public. Neither the EMSB nor the QESBA has seen the full report. A version of the preliminary Treasury Board Report on their audit of the EMSB was leaked to the media by unnamed sources, without including the comments of the EMSB. The EMSB has since reviewed and refuted some of the Treasury Board findings. Further leaks of the unreleased Education Department Report appeared in the media again on November 4<sup>th</sup>, the day the Parliamentary hearings on Bill 40 began.

All of this leads us to the conclusion that this process has not been as fair and independent as one would expect of government procedures.

Regarding the trusteeship itself, the QESBA notes that the mandate of the trustee is time limited and that control over EMSB initiated court cases remains with the elected Council of Commissioners. The choice of a trustee who is actively engaged in the English-speaking community was, under the circumstances, necessary.

The QESBA will continue to work with all of our member boards, including the EMSB, to ensure that our network provides the best possible education to our

students and to represent the positions of our members to the Government of Québec.

We will not be commenting further.



National School Boards Association  
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[www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)

November 4, 2019

## **Statement Urging Broad Participation in Governance of Public Schools**

The public school is both a cherished tradition, as well as a critical underpinning, to the democracies of both Canada and the United States. It is an essential means of ensuring that citizens are well prepared to elect their leaders and to make important decisions about shaping the future. That is why, in both of our countries, education is deeply rooted in the community and why leadership of it must be, too.

This mission of public schools is one that impacts not only students and their parents, but many other stakeholders – including senior citizens and other adults without children in school, and the business community, for instance – who pay taxes to fund education and have a direct interest in its success. All those voices must not only be heard, they need to be directly represented in the governance of the schools.

The best and time-tested way to ensure this happens is through locally-elected school boards, comprised of a cross section of a community. Here, concerns are raised and addressed, and broad consensus reached. This is possible only when the governance of the system is specifically designed to enable everyone impacted by the schools to be at the table and to participate equally in leading them.

School boards have demonstrated over many years their effectiveness in achieving this goal. They reflect all interests and provide an essential forum for competing views and expectations to be considered, and resolved. Public schools are a community's greatest asset. Everyone in the community should play a role in contributing to their success. Efforts therefore should be focused on strengthening the role of school boards. Proposals to abolish them are a big step in the wrong direction.

**ElizaBeth “Beth” Branham, President**

National School Boards Association

**Thomas J. Gentzel, Executive Director and CEO**

National School Boards Association



*The leading advocate for public education*



Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Opposition Leaders call upon the President of the National Assembly to exercise his responsibilities to all Quebecers**

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 7, 2020 – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) deplores the manner in which the CAQ Government is abusing its power by invoking closure on Bill 40; *An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance*.

In a letter to the President of the National Assembly Wednesday, the Premier of the province has decided to cease all debate on the future of public education in Québec and has decided to invoke closure.

“All opposition Leaders are asking that the President of the National Assembly to intervene in order to respect the broadest form of democracy in our society,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

The National Assembly represents the foundation of democracy in Québec. We ask you, Mr. President, to intervene so that an exceptional mechanism in the form of closure cannot be used in the blue room to eviscerate a level of democratically elected government that has existed for 150 years in Québec. We therefore ask, that you suspend the government's request on behalf of all Quebecers,” concluded the President.

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Information: Kim Hamilton  
Director of Communications and Special Projects  
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Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Bill 40 forced through regardless of unanimous opposition from education partners**

MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 8, 2020 – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) deplores the authoritarian manner in which the CAQ Government has rammed Bill 40; *An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance* through the National Assembly in the early morning hours.

The Minister added an irresponsible 24<sup>th</sup> hour amendment calling for the immediate removal of all French elected commissioners from office in an effort to stop them from challenging this legislation in court.

“It is a dark, dark day for democracy in Québec when a government regardless of the clear opposition to Bill 40, decides to cut all debate and force the adoption in the National Assembly,” said Vice-President Noel Burke.

Our community is very concerned with the contents of the Law and we are worried about holding complicated elections in November,” continued the Vice-President. “We will meet our lawyers in very short order to examine our next steps and should have more information in the coming weeks.

Quebecers of all stripes should be deeply worried about the dangerous precedent established by this government; that through the continuous and arbitrary

imposition of closure; they can create laws, at will, without any public or political accountability,” concluded the Vice-President.

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Quebec English School Boards Association

MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Statement from QESBA on Bill 40**

**MONTREAL, FEBRUARY 20, 2020** – In collaboration with English-speaking Community partner organizations, the Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) will challenge the constitutionality of Bill 40 which abolishes school boards and creates school service centres, before the courts.

The government of Quebec forced Bill 40 through the National Assembly in the early morning of February 8, through closure, despite unanimous opposition to the legislation and in complete disregard for the English-speaking community's right to manage and control its minority language educational institutions.

"Over the last year, QESBA has done everything we could to sit and discuss with the Minister of Education, Jean-François Roberge to ensure that our Section 23 control and management rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms were respected," said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

Today, we announce that our Board of Directors has unanimously given us a mandate to fight this law in the courts alongside our community partners," concluded the President.

In order to avoid prejudicing our legal preparations, the QESBA will not be commenting further at this time.



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Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **QESBA satisfied with the 2020-2021 Québec budget**

**QUÉBEC CITY, MARCH 10, 2020** – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is satisfied with the 2020-2021 Québec budget. The government funded the normal annual increase in the costs of the elementary, secondary and adult education sectors, has expanded a number of programs and has financed certain initiatives which will benefit students.

Using the Expenditure Budget documents, the QESBA estimates that the 2020-2021 increase for school boards is approximately 5.8%, which is higher than overall program spending by the Government of Québec.

In addition, the commitment to expand the ten-year capital investment budget to fund much needed upgrades to Quebec schools is a welcome measure.

“The 2020-2021 spending levels reflect the importance of public education in Québec. Of course, school boards have to wait for the budget rules, which provide the necessary details of the government’s transfers. One area of concern is the funding for the school elections in the English network scheduled for November 1 of this year. If these elections are to be successfully held, the Government of Québec should consider adequately funding school boards for their expenses,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

“Despite our current dispute with the Government of Québec regarding school governance, QESBA remains, as always, committed to working with the government of Québec on all issues which we believe will improve the education of our students,” concluded the President.

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Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Health and safety guidelines must be clear for the reopening of schools**

**MONTREAL, APRIL 25, 2020** – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA), transmitted its recommendations to the Government of Québec yesterday for eventual school reopenings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chairs of our school boards and their Councils of Commissioners are still legally responsible for the health and safety of more than 100,000 students and thousands of staff members across Québec. QESBA maintains that the health and safety of these individuals must be the guiding principle in making such significant decisions.

The QESBA urges the Government to use recognized national or international guidelines, including clear benchmarking, relating to the current and future situation of the pandemic in order to determine when and under what circumstances Québec schools can be reopened. As an example, the World Health Organization (WHO) recently issued these types of guidelines in a document entitled Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19.

“The Government of Québec should use these WHO guidelines to determine when and where schools can be reopened. The decision on when to reopen schools must be made using best practices and the most reliable data possible. Given the absolute imperative to protect the health and safety of students, staff and their families, nothing less will do”, said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

In the event that the application of these types of guidelines permit the gradual reopening of schools in some administrative regions this school year, the QESBA recommends that the following measures be taken:

- school attendance be voluntary for students;
- no student in the youth sector should be disadvantaged academically if they remain home or if their school remains closed;
- adaptations must be made for the adult education sector and for vocational training programs;
- clear guidelines be issued regarding physical distancing if necessary, and sanitary measures in schools and centres and for school transportation;
- special attention should be given to vulnerable student or those who are academically at risk based on evaluations already issued.

“The probable timeline of this illness will change the way we do things in the education network for some time to come. We may not be able, even in the medium term, to return to full class sizes in crowded, bustling schools. In order to prepare for this eventuality, we as a system must look at developing quality education programs with more robust distance learning components. Other jurisdictions have already introduced changes in this regard. It is time for us to embrace that change as well,” concluded the President.

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Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOUVERNEMENT OF QUÉBEC  
ON EDUCATIONAL ISSUES RELATING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

FROM THE  
QUEBEC ENGLISH SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

**April 2020**

## Background

On March 11, the World Health Organization (W.H.O.) announced that the COVID-19 outbreak constituted a global pandemic. After declaring a health emergency on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Government of Québec began introducing certain physical distancing and broad voluntary confinement measures shortly thereafter. All non-essential commercial and institutional activities were suspended as of March 24<sup>th</sup> until May 4<sup>th</sup>.

Daycares, schools, universities and colleges were closed as of March 13<sup>th</sup>, initially for a two-week period. The Government subsequently ordered these institutions to remain closed until May 4<sup>th</sup>. Year-end ministerial exams have been cancelled.

Québec universities announced that the physical presence of students on campus would not be required for the remainder of the semester.

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education launched the École ouverte/Open School on-line initiative on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Weekly educational packages are being sent out to students and parents by teachers as of last week, but there is no formal distance learning in public sector schools.

Premier Legault announced on April 22<sup>nd</sup> that the Government of Québec will make public a plan for the gradual reopening of schools and the easing of restrictions on commercial and economic activity during the week of April 27<sup>th</sup>.

With the objective of contributing to the Government's decision-making process, the Quebec English School Boards Associations (QESBA) issues the following recommendations to the Government of Québec relating to the educational implications of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

1. In the event that the Premier intends to gradually reopen public schools this current school year:
  - 1.1 The reopening of schools should be based on health and public safety guidelines developed by the World Health Organization (W.H.O.) for the easing of social restrictions. These guidelines are contained in the W.H.O. document entitled Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19 - Interim guidance, 16 April 2020. These considerations are:
    - a) Is transmission of the virus under control?
    - b) Is the health-care system equipped to detect, test, isolate and treat every case, and trace every person who came into contact with a positive case?
    - c) Are outbreaks minimized in special settings like health facilities and nursing homes?
    - d) Are there measures in workplaces and schools to prevent the spread of the virus?
    - e) Are the risks of importing more cases from outside the country being managed?
    - f) Are local communities educated, engaged and empowered to adjust to the "new norm"?

**It is the QESBA's recommendation that all of these W.H.O. health and public safety considerations should be met to determine which school could be safely reopened and when they could be safely reopened.**

**These same considerations should be used in decision-making around maintaining schools open in the event of a second wave of the pandemic during the 2020-2021 school year.**

- 1.2 Attendance for the remainder of this school year should be voluntary for students.
  - 1.3 The current school year should not be prolonged past the scheduled end date of classes.
  - 1.4 Students in the youth sector whose parents may not allow them to return to school this school year or those in schools which may remain closed, should not be penalized or disadvantaged academically.
  - 1.5 Special attention should be given to vulnerable students or those who are academically at risk based on student evaluations already issued.
  - 1.6 The Government has to take into account the complexity of reopening schools for boards whose territory covers multiple administrative regions.
2. For the reopening of schools this year and for the 2020-2021 school year, clear guidelines need to be issued by the Government and applied in the network to limit the risks to personnel, to students and to their families including:
    - a. Physical distancing
    - b. Appropriate infection control measures
    - c. Sanitary measures in schools and centres
    - d. School transportation (for students and drivers)
  3. Youth sector students should generally be advanced to the next grade based on the two evaluations issued. Allow teachers some leeway to advance those students who may be failing on the basis of the two student evaluations using their professional judgement.
  4. The 2020-2021 school year should not begin earlier than the scheduled date.
  5. Any redeployment of education network personnel to the health care network must be voluntary.



6. In the event that some form of physical distancing or other restrictions will need to be maintained in the 2020-2021 school year, the Government of Québec, in cooperation with its education partners, should develop and implement a more robust capacity for distance learning.

## **Conclusion**

This list of issues and considerations is not necessarily exhaustive. However, it does provide the Government of Québec with some key recommendations regarding how our educational sector can cope with the unprecedented situation we are all facing.



Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

NEWS RELEASE

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## **Government of Québec must readjust dates for reopening schools**

**MONTREAL, MAY 1, 2020** – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) submitted this morning the collective position of our nine member boards on the reopening of schools to the Minister of Education.

Our nine English school boards maintain that their priority is and always has been the health and safety of our students, staff and their families. While no English school board will reopen any of its schools and centres earlier than the dates proposed by the Government of Quebec, the respective English School Boards will decide if and when each of their schools and centres may reopen, once they determine that all the conditions required can be met in each instance.

“As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, there are still far too many unknowns that compromise the ability of school boards to safely and effectively reopen schools. Our assessment is that the implementation of these measures will vary significantly in different school boards and regions and may not even be possible in some areas. We are also convinced that the international health considerations cannot be met in many schools by the deadlines the government is imposing,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

“The nine English School Boards in Quebec wish to respectfully remind the Government of Quebec and the Minister of Education that we continue to assert our legal & constitutional authority to control and manage our minority language school system and it remains our public responsibility to make the right decisions for our communities.

“Rather than inspiring confidence in the public, this hastily announced plan by the government has had the effect of significantly raising anxiety and stress levels among teachers and parents in particular, as well as the general population. This is clearly evidenced by a petition to delay school reopening until September, already signed by over a quarter of a million citizens. We believe that local school boards are best placed to determine when and under what conditions schools and centres should open.” concluded the President.

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**Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association**

**Quebec English School Boards Association's  
Notice to the Minister of Education and Higher Education of Québec  
Monsieur Jean-François Roberge**

**On the Resumption of In-School Educational Services  
in the Schools and Centres of Québec's English School Boards**

**April 30, 2020**

**(English Version)**

## **Background**

On Monday April 27<sup>th</sup>, the Government of Québec announced a plan to gradually reopen elementary schools throughout Québec. High schools are to remain closed for the remainder of the school year.

The Government's plan requires that elementary schools outside the Montréal Metropolitan Community (CMM) reopen on Monday May 11<sup>th</sup>. Schools in the CMM are to reopen on Tuesday May 19<sup>th</sup>.

School attendance is to be voluntary for students. Vocational programs can resume according to the same schedule with reduced group sizes. In-person adult education classes may not resume.

A number of conditions must be adhered to in the reopening of schools (and centres):

- Reduced class size (maximum 15 students)
- Physical distancing requirements (2 metre) to be maintained
- Enhanced sanitary measures
- No group meals
- No physical education classes
- A reduction by 75% of the estimated capacity of school busses (a Public Health Department requirement)
- No school employee aged 60 or over should be in school

## **The Current Situation**

While there remains significant debate about the health and safety risks of establishing large groupings in public institutions, we acknowledge the need to reopen schools in a gradual and manageable way, ideally before the end of the current school year if conditions permit. It is our considered opinion that for the entire elementary school population of Québec, reopening in two stages only a week apart, does not constitute a safe and measurable return to school for our staff and students. This is, however, a responsibility and consequences that the Government of Québec and public health authorities have, thus far, taken upon themselves.

Our concern is with the practical and operational challenges in achieving this across the province by the prescribed deadlines, and its appropriateness on the Island of Montréal given the fact that this region is still very much an active COVID-19 "hot spot".

As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, there are still far too many unknowns that compromise the ability of school boards to safely and effectively reopen schools. Our assessment is that the implementation of these measures will vary significantly in different school boards and may not even be possible in some areas. We are also convinced that the international health considerations that we outlined in our previous recommendations cannot be met in many schools by these deadlines (these guidelines are contained in the WHO document entitled Considerations in adjusting public health and social measures in the context of COVID-19 - Interim guidance, 16 April, 2020, found here:

[https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331773/WHO-2019-nCoV-Adjusting\\_PH\\_measures-2020.1-eng.pdf](https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/331773/WHO-2019-nCoV-Adjusting_PH_measures-2020.1-eng.pdf)).

The Government announcement was made this week with a lack of proper consultation and with no prior notice to school board officials who have the required knowledge and expertise to effectively develop and implement a workable plan. To make such a significant announcement without sharing the required data, research, and analysis has had the effect of transferring the risks and fallout of a weakly developed plan from the Minister of Education to the administrators of schools and school boards without their essential input to its design.

A proper consultation would require that the data on how many students, teachers, support staff, and bus drivers are available would have been analyzed before announcing a plan to the public. Prior analysis would have revealed the wide disparity in the application of the plan from region to region and in fact from school to school in suburban and rural areas. This is data that should have been collected in the two weeks before a public announcement - not the two weeks after.

Rather than inspiring confidence in the public, this hastily announced plan by the government has had the effect of significantly raising anxiety and stress levels among teachers and parents in particular, as well as the general population. This is clearly evidenced by a petition to delay school reopening until September, already signed by over a quarter of a million citizens.

### **QESBA's Position**

Our nine English school boards maintain that their priority is and always has been the health and safety of our students, staff and their families. While no English school board will reopen any of its schools and centres earlier than the dates proposed by the Government of Quebec, respective English School Boards will decide if and when each of their schools and centres may reopen, once they determine that all the conditions required can be met in each instance.

The nine English School Boards in Quebec wish to respectfully remind the Government of Quebec and the Minister of Education that we continue to assert our legal & constitutional authority to control and manage our minority language school system and it remains our public responsibility to make the right decisions for our communities.

**“REOPENING SCHOOLS IN GOOD CONSCIENCE”**

**Submitted by: Stephen Burke, Chair of the Central Québec School Board, Wade Gifford, Chair of the Eastern Shores School Board, Michael Murray, Chair of the Eastern Townships School Board, Noel Burke, Chair of the Lester B. Pearson School Board, David D’Aoust, Chair of the New Frontiers School Board, Dan Lamoureux, Chair of the Riverside School Board, Paolo Galati Chair of the Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board and Alain Guy Chair of the Western Quebec School Board.**

Quebec’s response to the Covid-19 pandemic began well under the strong guidance of Premier Legault who, assisted by health authorities and ministers, carefully accompanied Quebec citizens along a path of unprecedented anxiety regarding their health and the resulting measures to control the outbreak. The return to a ‘new normal’ is proving to be infinitely more complex and has serious implications for education and the economy.

As we prepare to reopen schools over the next month, we are deeply troubled by the shifting criteria for the safe return of elementary students and the completion of studies for secondary students. Of particular concern is the level of Covid-19 cases in Montreal and possible serious illnesses in children. This is exacerbated by the sudden announcements this week of the change to the vulnerability age for staff from 60 to 70, followed by a directive that all high school students must complete their academic requirements on-line by the end of June. These announcements have raised public expectations to unreasonable levels. Parents who are deliberating about their children’s education should clearly understand two outcomes. At the elementary level, outbreaks in Montreal North and a school daycare in Mascouche prove that there will be elevated levels of contagion and transmission in schools. At the secondary level, the Minister’s promise that all secondary students will complete this year’s academic requirements on-line cannot be realized in an equitable manner.

That these near daily announcements have left school administrators, teachers, and support staff scrambling to assume the responsibility for their success is, in our considered opinion, an unreasonable demand. The burden that every teacher and administrator will experience in the event of a serious illness that results from a school outbreak is unacceptable.



For the only remaining publicly elected school officials, this has become a matter of conscience in the preservation of public safety throughout the province. The question for us is: “Can we, in the public interest and in good conscience, support the opening of schools by which we invite parents to voluntarily risk contaminating their children with a very serious and contagious disease?” This raises other important questions. Although voluntary, will some parents have to send their children to school due to the pressures of returning to work? Consequently, will a vulnerable portion of the population be adversely affected by these measures?

We cannot, in good conscience, rely on the argument that we are merely carrying out government directives. Possible responses to this dilemma range from compliance with orders under protest, to the refusal to reopen until risks are properly mitigated. In a more conciliatory fashion, our demand is for a delay of school openings, especially in Montreal, until risk management is openly discussed and managed collaboratively with our school board administrators. If such coordination is the case for the public health boards, then why not for public education? The Minister of Education has had six weeks to consult and collaboratively develop a workable plan for these measures. This was not done and has spawned a series of hastily issued centralized decisions without consultation, creating confusion within the system and leaving administrators grappling with the government’s poorly developed plan. In turn, this has served to further increase anxiety for parents, staff, and students, eroding public confidence in the government.

We previously cited the WHO guidelines required to safely ease isolation measures including: the assurance that disease transmission is under control; sufficient measures are in place in schools to prevent the spread of the virus; and the health system’s capacity to detect, test, isolate, treat, and trace every person who has been in contact with a positive case.

Let’s be clear that, by these globally recognized standards, we do not have the necessary conditions required to safely reopen schools on a large scale at this time. Our dedicated personnel are doing their utmost to comply with these extraordinary demands and have made many sacrifices in doing so. However, the responsibility for establishing these conditions, and the accountability for their consequences, must rest squarely with government.



Association des commissions scolaires anglophones du Québec  
Quebec English School Boards Association

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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## **QESBA files legal action on Bill 40**

**MONTREAL, THURSDAY, MAY 28, 2020** – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) has filed legal action on Bill 40: An Act to amend mainly the Education Act with regard to school organization and governance following our announcement in February.

QESBA along with co-applicants Adam Gordon, Sir Wilfrid Laurier School Board Parent Committee Chairman and the Lester B. Pearson School Board filed for an interlocutory injunction and judicial review in Quebec Superior Court on May 15, 2020.

“We recognize that the filing of this legal action is not ideal under the current circumstances. This should not come as a surprise as we publicly announced our intention to file this action accompanied by all of our education and community partners last February. It has, however, become a pressing matter due to the looming November school elections and the deadlines surrounding the legal requirements and logistics of these elections,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

“Furthermore, we are collectively facing an on-going pandemic which is making the planning for and potentially the holding of these elections complicated for School Boards.”

“QESBA along with our education partners requested in writing to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Justice a postponement of these elections in light of

the current situation in Québec and we were told that they would move ahead and hold the November elections regardless. We, therefore, felt that we had no choice but to move forward at this time based on our minority community's rights to manage and control our institutions as prescribed in Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," concluded the President.

QESBA is the voice of English public education in Québec and represents 100,000 students in 340 elementary, high schools, and adult and vocational centres across Québec.

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### **Victory for French minority community in British Columbia**

MONTREAL, JUNE 12, 2020 – The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) is delighted with and encouraged by the Supreme Court of Canada’s majority ruling in favour of the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF) and francophone parents in their case on funding of French public education in British Columbia.

“Section 23 rights are the cornerstones to any linguistic minority community in Canada and cannot be dealt with lightly. Although education is a provincial jurisdiction, the Parliament of Canada deemed it important to enshrine Section 23 rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to protect minority language education throughout the country,” said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

“Today’s decision is an historic ruling. The QESBA is delighted with the decision of the Supreme Court for its measured deliberations and in continuing to enforce the protection of minority education and communities in Canada,” concluded the President.

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## **QESBA asks Minister of Education to go back to the drawing board on Service Centre logos**

MONTREAL, JUNE 18, 2020 - The Quebec English School Boards Association (QESBA) strenuously objects to the Ministry's *programme d'identification visuelle* and the *trousses de signalisation* for new school service centres logos.

QESBA feels compelled to remind the Minister of Education and the Ministry of Education that despite the indiscriminate reference in a general mailing to 69 school boards claiming that June 15<sup>th</sup> is the date by which they become school service centres, according to the law, the nine English-language school boards remain school boards until November 5<sup>th</sup>.

"This repeated and obstinate refusal, in various communications from the Ministry of Education, to recognize that we have two linguistically distinct educational systems in Québec, with two distinct governance models and different dates whereby Bill 40 comes into force, borders on the absurd," said QESBA President Dan Lamoureux.

"Furthermore, in accordance with the provisions of Bill 40, the QESBA is recommending to its members that no changes be made to the visual identification, internal identification or electronic mail addresses of English-language school boards before November 5<sup>th</sup>. This date could, of course, be delayed depending on the outcome of the interlocutory injunction and judicial review that the QESBA has applied for in Québec Superior Court regarding Bill 40," continued the President.

"Secondly, the QESBA objects to the standardization of visual identification and the root address @gouv.qc.ca for electronic mail to be used by future school service centres. The public English-language school system has a proud history, which predates Confederation, and consistently high and remarkable results for its students. The English-speaking Community of Québec identifies

closely with the few remaining public institutions founded by and under the control and management by the community. English school boards also correspond to strong regional identities and attachments. The individual, personalized identification of our school boards is a reflection of the identities of our boards and is an important element in this attachment and connection to our communities.

All of this community, regional and even local identity and personality is negated by the Ministry's new standardized *programme d'identification visuelle*, imposed by the Minister with, yet again, no prior consultation. "The QESBA has asked the Ministry of Education to go back to the drawing board and work with the elected leadership of English school boards to find an acceptable visual identification program," concluded the President.

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